

AGENDA ITEM 11: Consider Commission support letter on S. 731/H.R. 1738 (Delta National Heritage Area)

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Requested Action: **Consider letter of support for S. 731/H.R. 1738**

Background: The 2009 Delta Reform Act charged the Commission with developing a plan to establish state and federal designation of the Delta as a place of special significance, which may include application for a federal designation of the Delta as a National Heritage Area (NHA). NHAs are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape. NHAs are lived-in landscapes. Therefore, NHA entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs. Through public-private partnerships, NHA entities support historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, heritage tourism, and educational projects. NHAs have no effect on water rights, property rights, or hunting and fishing rights within the designated area.

Senator Dianne Feinstein and Congressman John Garamendi introduced legislation in January 2011 to designate a Delta NHA, with the Commission as the management entity. While Delta NHA legislation did not advance during the 112th, 113th, and 114th Congress, legislation to establish a Delta NHA was recently introduced in the current 115th Congress. On March 27, 2017, Senator Feinstein and Congressman Garamendi introduced identical bills in the Senate (S. 731) and House (H.R. 1738) that would designate the Delta as California's first NHA, to be managed by the Commission; the bills were co-sponsored by Sen. Harris and Congressmen McNerney and DeSaulnier, respectively. On March 30, 2017, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee incorporated the Delta National Heritage Area and three other proposed National Heritage Areas into another bill, S. 713; the bill was reported out of committee.

Requested Action: Approve proposed support letter for S. 731/H.R. 1738, the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Establishment Act.